

Witness Challenges Contention by U.S. At Espionage Trial

By **ROBIN TONER**

Special to The New York Times

5
BALTIMORE, Oct. 11 — An expert on intelligence-gathering today disputed the Government's assertion that three photographs given to a British publication last year could have provided important information for the Soviet Union.

The significance of the photographs, taken from a satellite, has become a chief theme in the defense of Samuel Loring Morison, a former naval analyst who is on trial in Federal District Court here for espionage and theft of Government documents.

The prosecution rested its case this morning. At issue, the Government has argued, is not what the three satellite photographs showed, which was a Soviet aircraft carrier under construction, but what they indicated about the satellite technology and the intelligence procedures that produced them.

P
But in testimony for the defense today, Jeffrey Richelson of American University told the jury that any significant information the Soviet Union could have gleaned from the photographs was already available to it from other sources. The photographs were published by Jane's Defence Weekly in August 1984 and were reprinted widely.

'Didn't Tell Me Something New'

Mr. Richelson, a specialist on satellites and other intelligence issues, said that when he saw the pictures "I can't say I was very excited by them."

"They didn't tell me something new," Mr. Richelson added.

In cross-examination by Michael Schatzow, an assistant United States attorney, Mr. Richelson maintained that the photographs would provide no new significant information to the Soviet Union either.

Pressed by the prosecutor on how a Soviet intelligence agent would respond to that issue of Jane's, Mr. Richelson said, "I don't think he'd throw it in the trash can. At the very least it would go in the file."

Mr. Schatzow argued that the photographs would be valuable as one more piece of information in a mosaic of intelligence data. For example, he said, the timing of the photographs and speed of their distribution could provide insight into the American intelligence system.

Mr. Richelson replied, "I think the best you can say is it's a grain of sand on a very large beach."

The prosecution has acknowledged that the Soviet Union already had a manual on the KH-11 satellite, which produced the pictures, and that KH-11 photographs had been published twice before.

One of the final prosecution witnesses today was a fingerprint expert from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, who said he recovered a fingerprint from one of the photographs published in Jane's that matched Mr. Morison's.